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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET



SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Panama Bureau

FROM:		EXTENSION		NO.
Chief, Operations Group				DATE
				August 1988
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
	RECEIVED	FORWARDED		
1. C/Ops	29 Jan		DR Ry	
2.				
3. C/E&PS		10/3	h	
4. DD/FBIS	3 Oct		B	
5. D/FBIS	-		R	
6.				
7. PO/RA	10/3		am	
8. SA/CD	3 Oct		CD	
9. C/DOGS				
10. C/AS				
11. C/B&F/AS		10/1	y	
12. C/PERS		10/7	dh	
13.				
14. C/AG		11/10	mm	
15. Exec. Reg.				

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6 September 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Panama Bureau -- August 1988

I. GENERAL

A. At a change-of-shift get-together on 26 August, bureau employees serving between June 1987 and June 1988 were presented with the State Department's "Superior Honor Award" for "sustained superior performance... under conditions of duress and degradation of quality of life." Each employee received a certificate inscribed with his/her name and signed by Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams. !

B. A 21 August NEW YORK TIMES article alleging an orchestrated Panama Defense Forces' campaign of increased harassment against U.S. personnel in Panama led to a Panamanian media blitz denying harassment and levying numerous charges of U.S. treaty violations. Among the Panamanian denials and even expressions of PDF-U.S. military solidarity, the U.S. Southern Command stated that while the incidents THE TIMES reported did occur, there is no evidence of an orchestrated harassment campaign.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. There were several regional events of interest during the month, including the inauguration of a new Ecuadoran president, Nicaraguan reaction to proposed new U.S. aid to the contras, rumors of an impending coup in Guatemala, and increasing tension between Honduras and Nicaragua. Each of these issues showed the potential for continued and increasing interest.

2. Panama also became more interesting. In addition to the fallout from THE NEW YORK TIMES article, the bureau covered the death and funeral of three-time Panamanian President Arnulfo Arias. Arias' death appeared to spark renewed antiregime

activity in the form of campus demonstrations and strikes or strike threats by teachers and other public employees. The 15 August funeral for Arias, who has long been a symbol of Panamanian nationalism and opposition to the Defense Forces, was attended by a crowd estimated at 50,000. This was contrasted with the fewer than 10,000 who showed up to help General Noriega celebrate his 5th anniversary as PDF commander in chief three days earlier.

B. Lateral Services

In response to several high-level requests from local military consumers, the bureau provided transcripts and videotapes, respectively, of the 12 August speech by General Noriega and the accompanying ceremony marking the 5th anniversary of his assuming command of the Panama Defense Forces.

C. Technical

1. The following accountable property was received from headquarters:

-- 3 each Sharp Cassette Recorders, Model RD-764AV, Serial Nos: 880205769, 882055768, 88020567,. Cassette Recorder Serial No. 880205768 is damaged. Unit Price \$90.30 each.

-- 1 each Marantz Cassette Recorders, Model PMD-201, Serial No. 81U370155. Unit Price \$238.00.

2. The following accountable property was purchased locally:

-- 1 each Color TV/Monitor, JVC Model C-2175, Serial No.06141021. Unit Price \$495.00.

-- 1 each Wesco Hand Truck, 3W393. Unit Price \$235.43.

-- 9 each 14.6 cu ft Whirlpool Freezer, Serial Nos: S81239530, S81239509, S80946600, S81239523, S81238816, S80946606, S80946601, S80946838. Unit Price \$485.00.

-- 1 each VCR Sony Betamax, Model SL-S400, Serial No.1098617 Unit Price \$300.00.

-- 1 each VHS VCR-Hitachi, Model VT-260EM (AW), Serial No.71156650. Unit Price \$639.00.

-- 1 each Sharp VideoCorder W/Camera Bag, Model VC-C20UA, Serial No. 354058. Unit Price \$1,048.95.

3. The following accountable property was transferred to headquarters:

- Newstalk signal demodulation equipment
- Internet HPA's

III. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

- | | | |
|---------|---|------|
| August. | 1. Bureau Chief [] and family arrived 10 | STAT |
| August. | 2. Monitor-trainee [] entered on duty 30 | STAT |

IV. VISITORS

A. U.S. Army South Chief of Staff, Colonel Arnold Rossi, and Deputy Chief of Staff for Resource Management, Colonel William Connolly, visited the bureau on 25 August for a courtesy call and tour.

B. At the request of the USIS Public Affairs Officer, USIS officer Marcela Simons spent 29 and 30 August at the bureau for an orientation on the bureau's work and responsibilities. The PAO felt such an introduction to FBIS' work and capabilities would be invaluable for USIS junior officers and serve them well throughout their careers.



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Chief, Panama Bureau